

Communism: Its Evils and Its Causes

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Pastoral Letter read in all the churches of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati during Lent, 1937. As issued by the N. C. W. C. News Service.

IT seems almost incredible that Communism should be able to make headway in our country where liberty and God's abundant blessings have been so long enjoyed. But Communism is here, hideous as it is, and it is determined to expand. We must distinguish between growing Communism and victorious Communism. Growing Communism will make any promises before it attains power. Since it recognizes no moral principles it will employ any means to gain victory over its opponents. Victorious Communism loses no time in repudiating its promises.

In the minds of many a distinction is made between American Communism and foreign Communism. It is somehow assumed that American Communism is different from that of other countries, that it will speedily correct the abuses of capitalism and industrialism and that it must eventually evolve under the influence of our institutions into a sane democracy. We must not be misled by these false assumptions. American Communism in no way differs from Russian Communism. Its promoters boldly say that Communism is twentieth century Americanism.

Communism is international. It has as its object the overturning of every form of government that is not Communistic. Communism aims at world domination. It no longer thinks it expedient to speak of direct action through revolutions. But all its official declarations, even those as recent as the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, 1935, make it clear that the mission of Communism is to promote World Revolution. Its promoters, whether fanatics or not, whether sincere or not, seem to have the power to fanaticize their followers.

International Communism is already a "house divided against itself." This is to be expected. Division is in-

herent in error as unity is inherent in truth. While there is dissension in the ranks of both international and American Communism, they stand united in one Popular Front against the Catholic Church. They hate the strength of Catholic unity, founded on the truth of the Gospels of Christ, which Communists seem unwilling to investigate.

PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNISM

We cannot dismiss American Communism as we have in the past dismissed movements which promoted bigotry and religious strife. Its philosophy of life is anti-God and anti-religion. It is even anti-human. Its gross materialism and its virulent hatred of the very idea of God would make mere animals of men and women.

We must not dismiss American Communism by saying that its members are few and that they can accomplish little. We must not consider their social program as impossible of attainment since it will never be endorsed by the majority of American citizens. A majority endorsement is not necessary. We ought to be thoroughly familiar with what a well-organized and persistent minority can do in imposing its will by the enactment of legislation and even by the passing of Constitutional Amendments. It is true that the American Communists are relatively few, but they are active, resourceful, and fanatical.

We dare not dismiss Communism with an absolute denial of all its statements. We can say with the Communists that the poor man has been treated unjustly, that the laboring man has often been exploited, that many employers still consider the labor of a man as nothing more than a commodity, and maintain that the man who sells his labor sells himself for the time specified in his contract as an industrial slave. Cold and hard-hearted employers are turning millions of poor and laboring men towards Communism.

COMMUNISTIC STRATEGY

In considering our growing American Communism we should keep in mind many facts about it and study its methods. It suits its purpose for the moment to disguise its strength and its real objective. It therefore sets up a smoke-screen to distract and to deceive the American public. It cleverly takes up what it knows will appeal to

the American people, namely, "democracy," making itself its champion. With "democracy" as its chief slogan of propaganda it has succeeded, if not in making converts to Communism, at least in making an incredible number of good and sincere Americans sympathetic toward its program. We are told that American Communism must eventually be modified by our democratic institutions. The greatest emphasis is thrown on the necessity of a Democratic Front in the United States to save the country from threatened Fascism. The American Communists know the advantage of such strategy and they use it. They are not failing to consolidate their gains.

We should realize what victorious Communism would mean in America. We may be sure there would be no President of the United States, no Congress, no Supreme Court. The abolition of States' rights would be decreed. Another Civil War would be fought, not to abolish slavery but to make slaves of American citizens. This second American Civil War would in all probability take on the character of the war in Spain today. Victorious Communism in America would mean that millions of the best American citizens would be put to death for no other reason than their belief in God, or the practice of their religion according to the dictates of their conscience, or their respectability, or their possession of some property. Victorious American Communism would make America a shambles. Victorious Communism would de-Americanize our country.

CHURCH CONDEMNS COMMUNISM

It is absolutely untrue that the Catholic Church expresses preference today for any form of government. The mission of the Church in the world is not to organize civil governments. She must condemn what is morally wrong in a government as well as in the individual. But the Church will support every form of government that is careful to assure the mere essentials of justice and due consideration for the dignity of human nature. The Church must condemn atheistic Communism because it denies the existence of a personal God, because it persecutes all religion and because it recognizes no fixed principles of justice or of government.

The work of Communism in Russia is an open book. The most tragic chapter in the history of centuries is now

being written because of its perfidy in Spain. Communism at our very door has stifled freedom in Mexico. For years it has carried on there a relentless warfare against all religion and morality and has imposed an inconceivable tyranny upon the people to which we, as a nation, have been significantly indifferent.

Freedom of speech, the priceless heritage of all Americans, would become under Communism Russian freedom, that is, the duty to speak in favor of the government. In Russia our freedom of speech would be considered counter-revolution, the penalty of which is death. It is to be regretted that all sincere American Communists cannot spend a year in Russia, so that seeing its actual workings they may be convinced of its intolerable tyranny and its utter failure to solve the industrial and social problems of the world.

EVIL DAYS

All thinking and informed Americans who are truly loyal to their country, whatever be their religious faith or racial origin, are horrified by the tragedies brought about by Communism in the unhappy countries in which it has gained control. It is to be hoped that all will realize that evil days are being brought nearer to us by every advance of Communism in the United States.

One who joins the ranks of American Communists "must subordinate himself to all decisions of the Communist International and the Communist Party." The American Communist assumes the obligation of carrying out promptly the decisions of the Communist International. Not a word, however, is said to him of his duty to subordinate himself to the United States, to obey its laws and to defend its government against all outside powers working against its welfare. Every American should be deprived of his citizenship who does not give his undivided civil allegiance to the United States.

The American Communist, even the poorest and the unemployed, must pay weekly dues. Every payment, it is assumed, means increased interest in the Communist party. The poor Communist worker in America, we are told, who earns the starvation wages of \$16 a week is called upon to pay \$13 a year in dues. The man earning \$40 to \$50 a

week has to \$52 yearly in dues. If dues in like amounts were exacted from the poor and laboring classes for the Democratic or the Republican party what complaints of extortion would be registered! Is not the payment of these dues to the Communist party, which is controlled by the Communist International, a matter of government investigation? Should we not, as interested American citizens, ask our government whether Russia is not violating the agreement made when we accorded recognition? Should we not also learn the full extent of the opportunities that Russia has to carry on its Communistic propaganda through agents in this country whose position is strengthened because of our recognition? We may be reasonably sure that Russia is making use of every opportunity to spread the principles of the Communist International.

CAUSES OF COMMUNISM

We may ask: How is it possible that such a hideous thing as Communism is able to spread so rapidly over the whole world? Is its propaganda different from anything that has ever preceded it? How can sane, intelligent people be attracted to a system that means the worst degradation of human society ever thought out by the mind of man? How can sane men and women be induced to work for the reorganization of the people of all countries under a system which means ruin of the family, of the Church and of the State? How is it possible to bring into a world-movement, almost simultaneously in every country, well-organized groups whose chief object is a direct attack on God Himself, and the destroying of the very idea of God in the minds and hearts of others, especially in the minds and hearts of children? These same groups would destroy not only all religion but also human civilization.

For generations the so-called learned world has been trying to rule God out of the universe. Men who have had all the advantages of education, and who by reason of their learning should have been drawn nearer to God, have turned learning into a weapon with which, in their pride, they felt they could destroy the idea of God. University professors, writers, ministers who stood in Christian pulpits, modern and liberal Rabbis, rejecting the knowledge and the glory

of their traditions, in ever-increasing numbers became atheists and agnostics. Millions of young minds were influenced by their intellectual leaders.

The infected atmosphere of the universities soon spread to the colleges and high schools, and influenced almost imperceptibly great numbers of the American reading public. The people, realizing that God was not preached from the pulpit and sensing the atheism or agnosticism of the preachers, in turn, either became indifferent to God or doubted or denied His existence. These same preachers, having devitalized religion by taking God out of it, have been insisting for years that dogmas and creeds are not necessary. Without dogmas or creeds there can be no real and fixed code of morality.

The younger generations, without standards of morality to guide them, have become in greater numbers easy victims of the radicalism of our day. There seems to be little doubt that the widespread denial or doubt of the existence of a personal God and the consequent rejecting of the vital principles of religion have, more than anything else in the world, prepared the way for the spread of Communism. The Communists, realizing that they can make no permanent progress among those who know and believe in God, center their principal attack on the existence of a personal God. They do this while declaring liberty of conscience for all.

If one does not believe in a personal God, why should he not be a Communist or any other kind of dangerous radical? Why, in a word, should anything prove a barrier to such a man except physical force? If atheism and agnosticism continue to spread, the growth of Communism is practically assured. It will probably have to scourge the world by famine, chaos, pestilence and war before men will humiliate themselves before God and turn again to the only Saviour of the human race, the Lord Christ.

Human reason, unaided by any revelation or supernatural religion, can furnish conclusive proofs for the existence of a personal God. All educated groups living within the territorial limits of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati who deny that existence and wish seriously to study the proofs for it, will be given the opportunity on request. Clerical and lay professors will be assigned to the task of expounding these proofs.

LIBERALS

The liberals, and all generally who wish to be considered broad-minded, have done and are doing much to promote Communism. For generations they have been breaking down sanctions. They have thought of themselves as belonging to a smart set whose duty it was to stand with the atheists and agnostics in the so-called learned and scientific world. These liberals seem to have no convictions and no guiding principles. They are in great numbers superficial opportunists. We saw the curse of Liberalism before the World War. Certainly Liberalism gained nothing in that titanic struggle. Out of the World War came Fascism and a better organized Communism. But Liberalism seems to have learned nothing from the World War. Liberalism or broadmindedness stands for nothing today. Either it is fooled by Communism or it has not the courage to oppose it. In vague and unconvincing language it says that Communism will gradually evolve into a democratic institution, that it is important that all unite in a Popular Front to oppose the tyranny of Fascism, which it insists is the greatest menace to America and to all nations.

Growing Communism in America is making cat's-paws of the liberal and broad-minded people. It pretends to be their friend and to cooperate with them. How can one explain the position of our liberal press and of our so-called broad-minded groups that are almost unanimous in accepting the propaganda of democracy put out by Communists and in denouncing Fascism without any qualification? Why do present-day liberals fail in the same breath to denounce the worst of all tyrannies, that of Soviet Russia? If Communism were triumphant tomorrow in America, its first victims would be the very weaklings—the liberals—who helped to make it victorious. The liberals who conduct our press, the educated liberals of all groups, who have no real convictions and no real stamina of character, are doing very much at the present time to prepare the way for the spread of Communism.

CAPITALISTS AND INDUSTRIALISTS

Capitalists and industrialists must take a large share of the blame for the spirit of revolt among the masses of our

country. Many of them wish to dismiss the subject by saying that the wages paid the laborer, the hours of work, the standards of living, the opportunities given for the education of all the youth of the land are unequaled anywhere else in the world. They do not hesitate to assert that the more the employer does for the poor and laboring man, the more he demands. The employers and also great numbers of the employes know that too many of the union officials have not the real welfare of poor and laboring men at heart.

These officials are prompted by motives of self-interest. If they would work solely for the good of the laboring man they would not be so arbitrary; they would take local conditions into account and they would insist on real labor democracy by giving every man a right to vote and to express his opinion. This does not mean that local labor groups are not entitled to have national leaders to represent them, as employers have, if they so desire.

DIGNITY OF HUMAN NATURE

Unfortunately, too many capitalists and industrialists have failed to consider the dignity of human nature, the rights of labor, the insecurity of the poor and laboring man who wishes with self-respect and by his own efforts to have a modest but decent home, wholesome food for himself and his family, some provision for sickness, old age and the emergencies that occur in every life, and necessary and legitimate relaxation. The same employers fail to realize that labor is as necessary to capital as capital is to labor; that the worker, therefore, is entitled to a greater share in profits than he now receives, and that he should be given, through his own chosen representatives, some voice in the management of affairs. It is true that the capitalist as well as the industrialist is opposed to Communism, despite the fact that he has done so much, unwittingly, to encourage it. He is very willing that our government should attempt to crush it by legislation. This is an impossible task. He does not hesitate to say that the Catholic Church is the greatest bulwark in the country and in the world against Communism, and he condescendingly expresses his approval of her position. But his motives for opposing Communism and those of the Catholic Church are very different.

RESTITUTION

Too many capitalists and industrialists have been so wholly immersed in financial matters that they have had no time to consider a personal God and to realize that they have a direct responsibility to Him for their treatment of labor. The benefactions, bequests and foundations of capitalists during the last two or three generations show how little interested they have been in the things of God and in supernatural religion. Their benefactions and their foundations have rarely been set up to better the lot of the poor man through whom they accumulated, in large measure, their wealth. Facing death, they should have thought of bequeathing the poor and laboring man something in a spirit of justice and restitution. These capitalists and industrialists who still believe in industrial slavery must have a change of heart. They must literally get on their knees and adore the personal God whom they have denied or neglected. They must bring back religion into their personal lives. They must regulate their financial affairs by the justice and equity of religion. They have divorced religion from government, education, social life and finances with disastrous results to society. This manifold divorce has prepared the country for the spread of Communism.

Why cannot capitalists see the light of day? We hope that they mean to be just, according to their lights, but there is ample evidence to prove that in reality a great many of them are not just. Capital is entitled to a fair return on its investments, and nothing more. Pope Pius XI, speaking of the mutual dependence of capital and labor, insists that it is flagrantly unjust for capital to seize all the profits, if it were in a position to do so. Capitalists and industrialists, if only in the interest of self-preservation, should come together in small groups everywhere and say:

FIRST, thank God that such a bulwark of society as the Catholic Church defends the natural right of private property, and that this defense will last while the world lasts because the Church must defend rights founded on the natural law.

SECONDLY, we shall in the future take nothing more than a fair return on investments both for ourselves and our stockholders. We shall not take fabulous salaries or bonuses. We realize that if we adopt such measures we shall disarm our critics and we shall do away,

to a great extent, with one of the major causes of unrest among the masses.

THIRDLY, we shall in the future give to labor a larger share in the profits and management.

FOURTHLY, we shall in our benefactions and in our last wills and testaments make provision for the poor and laboring classes.

Capitalists should realize that the Catholic Church is the spiritual mother of all—the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlettered, the gifted, the mediocre, the moron, the successful and the failures. She wishes to lead all in the ways of salvation. She strives to secure for all the greatest measure of justice; but she knows the weakness of human nature and patiently continues to discharge her mission.

THE LABORING AND POOR MAN

The very sad condition of the lowest paid groups of laboring men and of the great majority of the poor has made their lot so unhappy that they have been spiritually starved. Eking out a mere existence, harassed by day and night, they have had practically no time to give to religion, to the things of God and to necessary relaxation. The destitute poor are in even a worse condition. They have known years of struggle and they are governed by a philosophy of despair. They are ready to exchange capitalism for any system, being convinced that whatever change of revolution comes, it will benefit their condition.

THE NEGROES

Among the poor must be included more than 12,000,000 Negroes who are almost at the point of destitution. These constitute a grave problem in our country because of the failure of society to recognize the dignity of their human nature and human labor. They are one-tenth of our population. The Communists with insidious deceit are making every effort to bring them into their fold. That one-tenth of our population could readily be incorporated into American Communism, which seeks to overthrow our form of government, is a terrifying thought. If during the last six years any other group of equal numbers had been forced to live under the miserable conditions which have been the lot of our 12,000,000 poor Negroes, we would have had to deal with serious disorders. Their religious spirit, their supersti-

tion, if you will, their innate cheerfulness and also their improvidence have so far helped to save them from Communism.

What arguments can be used to save the laboring man, the poor, the destitute and the Negroes from Communism? They must be shown from practical life and experience that Communism has not worked in Russia, where the masses of the people have literally been enslaved. American Communism means American slavery. The Negroes must be made to realize that under Communism they will again be slaves in a far worse condition than they were before our Civil War.

OUR SCHOOLS

It is a sad commentary on the school system of our country, which gives more attention and spends more money upon the education of its youth than many other nations combined, that it must face the terrifying charge of fostering Communism. The failure of our public schools to train our youth in religion and morality has deprived our boys and girls of their greatest safeguard against Communism. It is nonsense today to insist that the teaching of religion should be left to the home and to the churches. Religion is not taught and will not be taught in the home. It is not taught in churches where pews are empty. We are insisting that everything be left to the school except the all-important thing of religion.

MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATIONS

How can we explain the position of ministerial associations which, blind even to their own religious interests, keep on insisting that religion be excluded from the schools? They are not insisting that irreligion, agnosticism, and Communism be kept out of the schools. We hope that these men are acting in good faith. We hope they will examine their prejudice against the Catholic Church, perhaps even their hatred of her, which may have been instilled into them from childhood days. They seem united in a strong purpose to oppose anything that they consider likely to give the Catholic Church an advantage. One would think that they have no vision for the work of religion, that they are not able to acknowledge a good religious work wherever it is done, and that they are determined to let Protestantism suffer and die

rather than espouse any cause that might, even indirectly, aid the Catholic religion.

If we seek the ultimate reason of all this we may be sure that it is hate. They hate Rome. They hate what they call the Church of Rome. The Church they hate never existed, and if it did exist, every true Christian would have to hate it because of its evil mind and corrupt heart. This hate, we think, is for the most part not conscious. Fair and open-minded ministers in all the daily affairs of life resent the charge that they have hatred in their hearts for anything or anybody. Unfortunately, to hate Rome is a legacy of the Reformation. Let us pray that the Holy Ghost may illumine the minds of ministers and direct their thoughts in the ways of God. Ministers who know the Catholic Church cannot possibly hate her.

CHRISTIAN FRONT

To fight Communism is not merely the work of Catholics. They can be counted upon to do more than their share in defending their country against this Red revolution, just as they did in giving more than their quota in the World War. Communism should be fought by all men of good will. Likewise, all men of good will should unite in preparing a defense against Communism. The best possible defense is to put religion in all our schools. Investigation will show that Communism is being taught in hundreds of our schools. Put it out, and put religion in!

LABOR UNIONS

We have in our labor unions dangerous radical elements. It is to the interest of Communism to encourage them. Communists look upon strikes, chaos and civil disorders as so many opportunities to gain advantage or even to assume control. Strikes and the consequent public disorder are matters that concern the general welfare. Public opinion should be aroused against strikes that are promoted by dangerous radicals. Public opinion should be fair to labor, but relentless in opposing Communism in its ranks.

LEGISLATORS

Legislators, for the most part, have divorced Government from fixed standards of morality. The result is that

the men of sterling principles grow fewer in our legislative bodies from year to year. We find that capitalists and industrialists, through lobbies, are able in a large measure to control legislation for their own selfish purposes. Legislators, disregarding moral principles, will trade votes in order to serve lobbies or their own interests. It is little wonder that radical legislation, shocking to the moral sense, has been written into our statute books. There is danger of legislation still more radical. Communism is alert to take advantage of this declining branch of our Government, which is doing very much to bankrupt democracy. Communistic tendencies should be watched, not only in our legislatures, but also in the judicial and executive branches of our Government.

PROPAGANDA

One of the major causes of the spread of Communism is its effective propaganda. All opinion-forming agencies are used by it. The infection is, first of all, carried on from person to person. The press, the radio, the legitimate stage, the moving picture, ephemeral literature, leaflets, lectures and textbooks in our schools have been and are being employed in a subtle manner in its system of propaganda. Liberty-loving Americans of all groups would do well to unite in insisting upon a thorough investigation of these agents of propaganda.

PRAYER

It is our duty to pray under all circumstances. Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, has ordered that the prayers after all low Masses be said for Russia in order to stem the tide of Communism at its very source. He has approved for the whole world the prayer: *"Saviour of the world, save Russia!"* We should also add: *"Saviour of the world, save Spain! Saviour of the world, save Mexico!"* We should say daily definite prayers for Communists. Many of them, even among the fanatical, are sincere. If converted they could become ardent crusaders in the cause of Christ. We hope that most Communists have been deceived and are acting in good faith. Let us pray for them. Let us pray even for those in bad faith.

We must pray, according to the instructions of St. Augustine, as if all depended upon prayer, and work as if every-

thing depended upon us, the workers. There is a very definite program in the Gospels of Christ to counteract Communism. That program is the performance of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The spiritual works are: to counsel the doubtful; to instruct the ignorant; to convert the sinner; to comfort the sorrowful; to forgive injuries; to bear wrongs patiently; to pray for the living and the dead. The corporal works are: to feed the hungry; to give drink to the thirsty; to clothe the naked; to harbor the harborless; to visit the sick; to visit the imprisoned and to bury the dead.

Let us find a means of carrying out this program today, taking into account our actual conditions and the strife existing between class and class. We shall give in the near future definite instructions to the pastors regarding an organized movement to carry out this program.

We must remember that our acts and words, if they are to be spoken in the Name of Christ and for Him, must be words and acts of love. We must hate the hideous teaching of Communism, but we must love and serve the Communists as brothers for whom Christ died. All understand the language of love. The greatest number can be won by the ministry of love.

Communism Opposed to Democracy

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TO the student of history, it is incongruous, therefore, and to the Catholic not without a touch of bitterness that in our own day and age Russian Communism should make its lying appeal to the weak, the underprivileged, and the oppressed by holding before them an illusory paradise at the very moment it attacks the Church, the only certain guide to the Paradise for which man was made. With this in mind, dearly beloved brethren, it is our purpose to set before you briefly two points: First, the real nature of Communism; and second, the utter impossibility of any alliance between Communism and Democracy.

THOROUGHLY ATHEISTIC

A movement can be known only by the philosophy which actuates it. And it would be a serious misconception of Communism to consider it as just a political and social doctrine and practical economic guide. The fact is that Communism is dialectical materialism, thoroughly atheistic, which seeks to take the place of religion as it has hitherto existed, and in particular to destroy Christianity. Communism does away with God completely; it is violently, implacably, obscenely anti-God. It promotes organized blasphemy, atheistic festivals, compulsory atheistic education on State schools, and even has a special decoration for those who distinguish themselves in the campaign against God. Religious tolerance, when sometimes practiced, is an exceptional, temporary measure for strategic purposes only. A divorce of Communism from atheism is as impossible as its divorce from Marxian materialism. Communist atheism is a religious belief, the belief that man's destiny is of this earth, a belief that renders God superfluous, an empty hallucination.

To the Communist, man is a mere aggregation of cells; having no future beyond this world, he is capable of no sentiments higher than those befitting a mechanical conception of society. Work for this society is his highest good;

technology, progress in material science, as foundations for further economic advance, are the life work which befits his nature. The morality of the Communist is the morality of combat. Whatever assists the revolutionary class war waged by the proletariat is good; everything else is bad, or, at best, superfluous. It is significant that Communists speak of a "party morality," meaning thereby not the moral code governing relations between members of the party, but the moral code which is to replace accepted standards of morality.

THREAT TO AMERICA

In our United States, where free men would not endure the terrorist tactics of the Russian *Cheka* and *Ogpu*, and where class warfare is more difficult to foment than by merely inciting the *Bednjaks* against the *Kulaks*, Communism is representing itself lately as an ally of Democracy. By highlighting our admitted maldistribution of natural wealth and essential buying power, by subtly misinterpreting natural inequalities of birth, brains, ingenuity and initiatives, Communists in the United States are posing as champions of popular rights. It is not particularly surprising that passionate diatribes, disingenuous fallacies and insidious invitations to class warfare should delude a certain number of our people who have not been trained to discernment, but that this Communistic propaganda, camouflaged in the borrowed finery of American ideals should dupe college professors, university students, journalists, so-called religious leaders, and ordinarily intelligent persons of affairs, this constitutes to our mind the direct threat made today against the American republic.

Democratic representative government, stands or falls with the proposition that men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, which spring from man's nature and are essential to his welfare. Among these rights are the right to life, the right to worship God, the right to personal freedom, the right to marriage and a family, the right to educate one's children, the right to hold some property in private ownership. All of these rights Communism not only denies, but destroys. The individual is effaced by the demands of the party; party discipline is enforced by the dictator; the much-wooed proletariat gets not what it

wants but what the party and the dictator think good for it. Democracy is based upon the propositions that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, that governments are instituted among men to secure life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

ITS SINGLE PURPOSE

Communism calls its government "the dictatorship of the proletariat"; it is, in fact, the dictatorship of one man; it has but a single purpose: to perpetuate itself. It is not a State which seeks the common good of all its citizens, but deliberately a one-party State which cannot benefit and is not intended to benefit all its citizens. The Communistic régime admits no freedom of opinion, no opposition; its penal code is a political weapon; its courts are instruments for the discovery of plots; terrorism is the prerogative of the ruling clique. Democracy is based upon the brotherhood of man which must in turn rest upon the fatherhood of God. Communism's cry is: "Down with the love of our neighbor; what we want is hate" (Lounarcharski, Soviet Minister of Education). Communism an ally of Democracy? The man who suggests such a thing is either ignorant or vicious.

Here is a strange thing. After years of experience with Communism in Russia, an experience marked by millions and millions of deaths by famine, by millions of murdered in the most awful slaughter, by millions of oppressed languishing in Soviet dungeons or deported to forced labor on Solovki or in Siberia, after all we have learned from capable observers of the misery, the terrorism and the slavery of a whole people beneath the Communist yoke, after all this, we say, it seems incredible that Communist propaganda should still be successfully diffused among the masses of the people. And it seems even more incredible when we note that these millions of victims of Communist destruction have been for the last twenty years not the nobles nor the rich nor the capitalists of the old Czarist régime, but the common people, workmen and peasants, the very ones to whom Communism makes its most alluring appeal.

WORLDWIDE PROPAGANDA

The explanation of this apparently incredible paradox is to be found in the three elements upon which Communist

worldwide propaganda relies: First, the diabolical cleverness of its central office in Moscow whence orders go out to all the world (and in all the world, including our own country and our own State and our own archdiocese, these orders are obeyed); second, the ignorance of our people about the true nature of Communism; and third, the apathy of those whose duty it is to take effective measures against this menace, called by Our Holy Father Pope Pius XI "the first and greatest peril that confronts the world today." As to the infernal master of Moscow, we can but pray that our nation may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil; as to the ignorance of our people, we call upon all Catholics according to their opportunities, to inform themselves about the threat of Communism; and as to the unconcern of those who should be leaders in the community, we give them Christ's warning about the blind, who lead the blind.

Christians Cannot Halt Between Two Opinions

SIR ARNOLD WILSON, M.P.

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"If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. . . and the people answered and said, 'God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods.'"

THUS Joshua of old at Shechem. Christian men in Europe, of whatever communion, must make the same choice today. Those who are today in power in Madrid and in Barcelona have followed the example set from Moscow. They have proscribed religion, they have admittedly forbidden religious observances in public or in private and have done all in their power to make the practice of religion impossible. Yet, in the words of the current issue of the National Labor Party's Journal the *News Letter* (p. 158), a deputation from the Church of England has been to Barcelona and Madrid to investigate, presumably,

the spiritual value of life without charities, priests, or religious services, under a dictatorship of anti-God. This report is a typical example of dishonest propaganda against Catholicism.

This little group of clerics was careful not to visit other parts of Spain and it did not, of course, represent the Church of England, or any church. Yet it is a fact that the Archbishop of York, and certain Bishops, who are as anxious to dogmatize on foreign politics from pulpits as they are unwilling to speak, as they always can, in the House of Lords, where their ignorance might be exposed by other speakers, have shown active sympathy with the anti-God party in Spain. They have given fresh life to lying reports that "one side are as bad as the other" and they have encouraged those who still listen to them to believe that Christians can and should be neutral, *i. e.*, indifferent to events in Spain.

Others take the view that Christians, whether Catholics or Protestants, Presbyterians or Methodists, should not take part, as such, in political movements. They may press for official support for denominational schools, or object to it: they may speak in favor of, or against, reform of our marriage laws: they may uphold, or defend contraception or sterilization. But when the principle of religious liberty in Spain is at stake, they are told that to take sides is "politics," and that religious societies should hold aloof. Let those who take this view remember what Spain has meant to Europe.

Here Rome defeated Carthage of old: here Islam was driven back by the forces of Christendom twelve centuries ago: here Napoleon met what proved to be the beginning of the end of his dreams of world dominion. The battle for European liberty has thrice been fought in Spain: it is being fought anew and, as in the Napoleonic wars, the vast majority of Spaniards and almost all the Portuguese are opposing an attempt to impose upon them a régime which was born in Moscow, and can only exist in an atmosphere of hatred. Let those who doubt this go to Communist meetings, and to gatherings under their ægis, and note the spirit of hate which pervades every speech.

The conflict now raging is, in essentials, a battle between those who deride Christ, mock at all religion, and despise

the word *freedom* and, on the other hand, those who uphold the right of public worship, and of individual freedom, who believe in God, and repudiate the gospel of hate. These are, in Spain, in the vast majority. The population, over three-quarters of Spain, is behind the policies for which General Franco is fighting. The great majority in the area still under Red rule is, if we are to believe every uncensored report from impartial correspondents, anxious for deliverance by him from their oppressors. Behind Franco is the united voice and the prayers of Catholics in Spain. Neutrality may be necessary, so far as concerns action by governments, but Christian men cannot halt between two opinions. Chivalry consists in taking sides—the right side: loyalty to Christ and His Church requires us to take sides against those who mock the one and would destroy the other.

There are moments in the political life of every country when religion transcends politics. Good Catholics are not neutral in Germany when they see their Faith threatened by the secularization of schools and the proscription of religious societies. Catholics were not neutral when the anti-Catholic movement in France was at its height. They stood their ground, and held tenaciously to what they held dear, and triumphed.

The blood of the martyrs in Spain has been shed for us no less surely than that of the saints of old. Shall we Christians in this country, secure, as we believe, in our religious and secular freedom, be so cowardly as to pretend that the salutary rule against political controversy, in a country where no party but the Communist party seeks to interfere with religious liberty, forbids us to uphold, to console, to pray for, and even to assist, our co-religionists in Spain? God forbid!

The special correspondent of the *Times* has declared repeatedly that General Franco is no Fascist—and no newspaper is so well informed or better served. Everyone who knows Spain agrees that Spaniards have no sympathy with the highly centralized forms of government which go with Fascism, and that the poison of Communism is foreign to their natures and repellent to their instincts.

Let Christians then, of every communion, declare themselves upon this issue, which transcends mere party politics, and make their voice heard.